

TBWA's Carl Willoughby seeks a better way of working in the ad world

 By [Jessica Tennant](#)

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Carl Willoughby, who joined TBWA\HuntLascaris in December as ECD, responsible for the major Standard Bank and Nissan integrated accounts, is perhaps more challenged to find a better, more collaborative way of working, not just within the agency, but in terms of the actual agency model and the ad industry at large.

"TBWA is familiar and there are some big challenges on the horizon. It's exciting and daunting, but I'm optimistic. The agency has a fantastic reputation in the industry and right now it's a really good place to be."



Here, he tells us what he loves most about being in the business of ideas and also finding better ways to say or do things...

■ **What's at the top of your to-do list?**

To gain our clients trust, to build the right open relationships so that we can develop better work.

■ **Comment on your work at TBWA and The Open Collaboration in particular over the last few years.**

When I started at Openco people felt I was more of the "big agency" guy. Big systems, different ways of working, but I adapted to the small nimble way of doing things and I think it's this approach that I can bring into TBWA. Openco has been a great place to learn and make things happen. We won a few pieces of business but the agency is always one that can deliver, no matter the task.



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■ **What do you love most about your career?**

Ideas. Finding a better way to say something, or do something. The opportunity to create, to change perception. The ability to influence behaviour. I also love the fact that we keep learning. That things keep evolving. Often this is daunting, but it's what makes it all worth it.

■ **What are you currently reading/watching/listening to for work?**

I've just finished Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers* and just started reading *Sapiens*, but the actual reading I'm doing is Facebook's *Blueprint*; it's all around online advertising for Facebook. I've also started listening to podcasts, and am currently enjoying [Reply All](#); it's all about how the internet has changed how we live and how we're affected by it.

■ **Tell us a bit more about the telecommunications company you launched in the Middle East?**

It was the third company to enter Bahrain with two well-established incumbent companies to compete with. It was Saudi-owned and they tend to do things a little differently. It was still highly competitive – I suppose a lot like things are back here. We had a reasonably-sized agency and turnaround times were always tight, but we had fun and accomplished a lot in a short space of time. Today it seems to have sustained growth and is highly competitive within the market.



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■ **What's next?**

I think the ad industry is facing many challenges and we have to continually evolve to remain relevant and be the first whom our clients turn to for input. I'm not sure exactly where things are going, but am honestly excited to be at TBWA. The group is doing well and is currently pushing to evolve further. Exciting times ahead.

ABOUT JESSICA TENNANT

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